



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

April 17, 2020

Judith M. Persichilli, R.N., B.S.N., M.A.
Commissioner
Department of Health
State of New Jersey
P.O. Box 360
Trenton, NJ

Dear Commissioner Persichilli:

As you are aware, there has been a tragic outbreak of COVID-19 at the Andover Subacute Rehabilitation Center in Andover, NJ. I have been loudly beating the drum to get additional resources to Andover to help stabilize the outbreak there and better protect residents and front-line health care workers. I am glad that we have been working together, along with Governor Murphy and county and state officials, since Saturday, to get additional personal protective equipment (PPE) to protect residents and staff at the facility.

I am grateful that you, under the leadership of Governor Murphy, have directed the New Jersey Department of Health's Communicable Disease Service, in coordination with the Sussex County Department of Health, to deploy a team to assist the residents and staff at Andover and to enforce necessary protocols and safety measures. It is a huge relief that the residents and staff at Andover will start to get the assistance that is so desperately needed there. I have also asked the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to deploy National Guard and Reserves to assist and the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to provide additional support in the form of PPE and staffing from the U.S. Public Health Service.

In addition to the efforts made to assist Andover, I also urge your Department to please also assist dozens of other long-term care facilities facing critical shortages in the Fifth District. My office has received urgent requests from these facilities for needs across the board, including: front-line health care staffing, gowns, goggles, gloves, face shields, N95 face masks, thermometer covers, and disinfectant supplies.

I have heard from forty-five long-term care facilities in Sussex, Warren, Bergen, and Passaic Counties that they are in critical need of these supplies, additional personnel, and other assistance as they work to contain the outbreaks of COVID-19 in their facilities. I have communicated with your staff about the specific locations and their PPE and staffing needs. We will not beat this

virus and flatten the curve if COVID-19 is able to continue to spread like wildfire in these long-term care facilities. Moreover, it is incumbent upon all of us to ensure that the most vulnerable among us are adequately protected from contracting the virus.

Thank you for your service and leadership during this extraordinarily difficult time. I stand ready to assist you as additional resources are deployed to these facilities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "J. Gottheimer", with a stylized, cursive script.

Josh Gottheimer
MEMBER OF CONGRESS